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The Lyons Den

LEONARD LYONS

Two defeated political candidates, Richard Nixon and James Donovan, dined at the Colony on Monday night. Donovan, who'd just returned from his mission to Cuba, gave no indication of any intention to campaign again. Nixon, however, kept shaking hands with waiters, busboys, cloakroom attendants and any customers who approached him. "You can't be Richard Nixon," said one lady with whom he'd exchanged banter, "you're so facetious."

Nixon seemed light-spirited again when I saw him later at the 21 Club. He shook hands once more with waiters, guests and cloakroom attendants. His grin was wide as he insisted on introducing me to the others around him. "Here. Meet a real celebrity—the columnist." He is fully aware of my personal political views, but stated: "He writes for The New York Post, but I consider him one of my good friends in New York."

Speaking as a veteran observer of politicians' habits, it seems to me that Richard Nixon has not retired. He started to recall a dinner meeting we'd had at the Beverly Hills Hotel two summers ago. "How is that bright young daughter of yours, who was with you?" he beamed. "So bright." Fine, I said, my child was fine. He entered the cab, then stepped out again. "Not a daughter. Your son," he said, correcting himself. "The daughters were mine" . . . Yes, Nixon must be running.

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